

REMARKS

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicant thanks Examiner for indicating that claims 4 and 11 contain allowable subject matter.

Claims 3-12, 14, 16-18, 20 and 23-26 were pending in this application. By way of this reply, claims 3, 23 and 24 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 4-12, 14, 16-28, 20, 25 and 26 are currently pending in this application. Claims 4, 11-12, 14 and 16 are independent, the rest of the claims depend, directly or indirectly, from either claims 12, 14 or 16.

Claim Amendments

Allowable claim 4 has been amended to include the features of independent claim 12 and intervening claim 3. Thus, claim 4 should now be allowed.

Allowable claim 11 has been amended to include the features of independent claim 12 and intervening claim 9. Thus, claim 11 should now be allowed.

Claims 12, 14, and 16 have been amended by way of this reply to incorporate limitations claims 3 and 4. Accordingly, claim 3 has been canceled and claim 4 has been amended. Claims 9-12, 14, 16, 17, 25 and 26 have been amended to correct minor informalities. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments.

More specifically, claim 12 as amended recites, *inter alia*, “when it is judged that the image data is not to be maintained, said maintenance judgment means causes said communication unit to transfer the image data to the other image processing apparatuses and deletes the received image data from the image processing apparatus, and said maintenance judgment means attaches information for identifying an image processing apparatus, which is an origin of the image data, to the image data as a transference history of the image data when the image data is to be transferred.” *Emphasis added.*

The combination of Kotani and Seaman does not show or suggest said maintenance judgment means attaches information for identifying an image processing apparatus, which is an origin of the image data, to the image data as a transference history of the image data when the image data is to be transferred as now claimed, and claim 12 as amended is submitted to be allowable over the combination of Kotani and Seaman for at least this reason.

Independent claims 14 and 16 are allowable for similar reasons as set forth above in reference to independent claim 1.

Claim Rejections

Claims 3, 5, 7-10, 12, 14-16-18, 20 and 23-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kotani (Pub. No. US 2002/0078038) in view of Seaman et al. (Pub No. Us 2003/0081145, herein Seaman).

Claims 3, 23 and 24 have been canceled by way of this reply, and so the rejections of these claims are moot. Claims 12, 14 and 16 have been amended to include limitations from allowable claim 4 as well as canceled intervening claim 3. Therefore, claims 12, 14 and 16 are now allowable. Claims 5, 7-10, 17, 18, 20, 25 and 26 depend, directly or indirectly, from either claim 12, 14 or 16. Therefore, these claims are allowable as well. Accordingly, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejections of claims 3, 5, 7-10, 12, 14, 16-18, 20 and 23-26 are respectfully requested.

Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kotani in view of Seaman, and further in view of Shaffer et al (US 6,389,181, herein Shaffer).

Claim 6 depends from claim 12, which is now allowable. Therefore, claim 6 is allowable as well. Accordingly, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claim 6 is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this Reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Aslan Ettehadieh, Reg. No. 62,278, at the telephone number below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: August 4, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

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